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INR WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS OF DEVELOPMENTS IN HUMAN RIGHTS

No. 86, December 21, 1978

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AMERICAN REPUBLICS

Argentina

Prisoner Releases Expected. Authoritative army sources informed Ambassador Castro on December 13 and 14 that an unspecified number of political prisoners will be amnestied on Christmas and that the jails will be almost empty by the time the Inter-American Human Rights Commission arrives in Buenos Aires next spring. Interior Minister Harguindeguy suggested that the Christmas amnesty would encompass about 500 prisoners, and more might have been included but the Beagle Channel conflict with Chile was monopolizing the government's energy and resources. (CONFIDENTIAL, Buenos Aires 9821 and 9822, December 15)

INR Comment. Self-interest will probably prompt the Argentines to empty their jails of executive (uncharged) prisoners prior to the IAHRC visit. A substantial number of detainees are likely to be released, but in all cases where the prisoner is considered a continuing security risk, charges will probably be filed and the prisoner shifted from executive to judicial authority. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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Chile

More on Discovered Bodies. A Carbinero noncommissioned officer has reported to his superiors that 12 of the bodies recently discovered at Lonquen are those of terrorists he helped to execute in September 1973, 3.3(b)(1) The Carbinero claims that the executions were authorized by a lieutenant who disobeyed orders from his superiors to send the accused terrorists to Santiago for trial. Senior-level Carbinero officers are reportedly investigating the case and questioning the lieutenant, who is now an active duty captain.

3.3(b)(1) a senior Carbinero officer has stated that the results of the Carbinero investigation will be turned over to the special investigating judge in charge of the Lonquen case.

3.3(b)(1)

3.5(c)

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